

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A container for gifts or the like, comprising a first half-shell (2) and a second half-shell (4) which can be coupled mouth to mouth to form a closed container (1) suitable for holding the gifts, characterized in that connection means (12, 16; 14, 18) are associated with each of the half-shells (2, 4) and can be mutually engaged in order to keep the two half-shells connected to one another, said connection means comprising buckle-like connection means comprising a male element (12, 14) integral with said first half-shell (2), a female element (16, 18) integral with said second half-shell in the mutual engagement position, and articulation means (20, 20a) which, in the configuration of mutual engagement of the connection means permit an opening pivoting movement of one half-shell (2) relative to the other half-shell wherein said connection means (12, 16; 14, 18) connect the two half-shells to one another in a manner such as to permit a limited movement of one half-shell relative to the other in a direction perpendicular to the plane of the mouth.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Currently Amended) A container according to Claim 1~~[[4]]~~, characterized in that the male element comprises a flexible tab (14) extending from the periphery of the mouth of one half-shell (2) and provided with an end projection (40), and in which the female element (18) comprises a bridge-like element (18, 54) integral with the side wall of the other half-shell (4), defining a slot (24) in which the projection (40) of the tab (14) can be inserted.

6. (Currently Amended) A container according to Claim 1[[4]], characterized in that the connection means comprise a male element (12) integral with one half-shell (2) and having a generally anchor-like configuration with resilient anchoring ends (22a and 22b), and a female element formed by a bridge-like wall (26) defining an open-ended slot (24) in which the male element can be inserted, and in which the anchoring ends (22a, 22b) can engage the walls (28, 30) delimiting the slot.

7. (Original) A container according to Claim 6, characterized in that the male element (12) comprises a pair of substantially parallel, resilient prongs (22) separated by a slot (32), wherein the female element comprises a guide rib (34) which can be inserted in the slot (32) between the prongs, and wherein the female element comprises projecting engagement means (36, 38) which can cooperate with the anchoring ends (22a, 22b) of the prongs (22) to prevent removal of the male element (12) from the female element (16).

8. (Previously Presented) A container according to claim 1, characterized in that it comprises means for facilitating the opening of the container, comprising a flexible tab (42) connected to the periphery of the mouth of one of the half-shells (4), the other half shell (2) being capable of being superimposed on the end of the tab in the region of its connection to the respective half-shell, in the closed configuration of the container.

9. (Previously Presented) A container according to claim 1, further comprising a heat-shrinkable band (52) surrounding the connection region between the two half-shells.

10. (Previously Presented) A package comprising a hollow body including in its interior a container (1) according to claim 1.

11. (Original) A package according to Claim 10, characterized in that the hollow body is a chocolate egg.